Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Mike Honda (D-San Jose) – Ranking Member, Energy Subcommittee, House Committee on Science – introduced H.R. 5477, the **Innovatio ns for our Nation's Vital Educational Needs for Technology (INVENT) Act** .

The bill would establish a competitive program within the National Science Foundation (NSF) to develop tools to foster inventiveness and innovation at the elementary, secondary, and undergraduate levels.

It would also direct NSF to implement a public awareness and outreach campaign and establish within NSF, engineering and social science research programs on the process of invention and innovation.

Rep. Honda introduced the bill, stating, "The legislation will provide America's next generation of innovators the tools needed to keep America number one in this field. At an innovation summit I hosted in San Jose in December, 2005, the participants emphasized America's unique 'outside of the box' approach to innovation which has enabled us to become world technology leaders," he added, concluding, "We cannot rely on mere luck; we must provide today's students the expertise to think creatively, in combination with their technical skills, so that they outpace America's competitors."

In supporting Rep. Honda's efforts, **Cynthia Johnson, Vice President for Corporate Relations at Agilent Technologies** said "Agilent applauds Congressman Honda for his work to help our schools foster innovation.

As a high-tech leader, Agilent sees every day how crucial innovation is to winning in the marketplace.

That's why we fund a range of inquiry-based, hands-on science education programs.

We look forward to working with Congressman Honda to help America's students develop their creative thinking and problem-solving abilities."

Dr. Belle Wei, Dean of the College of Engineering at San Jose State University, added, "Innovation is the key to keeping America competitive and improving quality of life for all people worldwide. It is critical that we foster innovativeness among our students, and make innovators into role models for young people to aspire to."

Rep. Honda noted that "when you look back at the history of particularly innovative companies, as measured by patent activity, it turns out that much of their success is driven by the phenomenal output of a few outstanding employees. What my bill seeks to do is learn what makes these people tick and teach our young people the keys to their success."

The bill builds upon recommendations made in the report *INVENTION: Enhancing Inventiveness for Quality of Life, Competitiveness and Sustainability* produced by the Lemelson-MIT Program with funding from the National Science Foundation.

Dr. Merton C. Flemings, chair of the committee that produced the report, said, "It is increasingly possible and important to leverage human ingenuity in the best interests of this nation and its people," and noted the committee's goal "to develop a multidisciplinary understanding of inventive ingenuity, of how it can be fostered in our youth, and how it can be

applied to solving problems of our times."

Bill Morin, Director of Government Affairs for Applied Materials, added "Applied Materials' success depends on being able to deliver innovative and reliable nanomanufacturing technology solutions to our customers' needs. To accomplish this, we require – *and hire* – the most creative and inventive people and support efforts to increase this talent pool. Thus, we applaud Rep. Mike Honda's "INVENT" Act, which would bolster efforts to teach American students to be innovative and inventive and to make all Americans more aware of how important these skills are to our nation's economic growth and prosperity."

Rep. Honda's bill has received support from a variety of sources, including Hewlett Packard, Agilent, TechNet, venture capitalists such as Vinod Khosla, and entrepreneurs such as Ash Padwal, President of Allied Telesis Capital Corp.

Congressman Honda is currently working with his colleagues on the House Science Committee to incorporate this bill into a larger innovation package, scheduled for consideration on June 7th , 2006.